



News Release

For immediate release: July 31, 2015

(15-144)

Contacts: [Donn Moyer](#), Communications Office
[Margise Allen](#), Communications Office

360-236-4076

360-236-4072

***Salmonella* illness outbreak that may be linked to pork expands to 90 cases**

Federal disease investigation team to join state and local health officials next week

OLYMPIA — The outbreak of *Salmonella* infections that may be linked to pork products has grown to 90 cases in several counties around the state. The ongoing outbreak is under investigation by state, local, and federal public health agencies.

With the increase in cases, state health officials have asked the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to send a special team to help with the investigation. This team of “disease detectives” will arrive in Washington next week.

Disease investigators are searching for possible exposure sources from farm to table. An apparent link to pork consumption or contamination from raw pork is the strongest lead, though no specific source has yet been found. The likely source of exposure for some of the ill people appears to have been whole roasted pigs, cooked and served at private events.

All of the people who’ve been sickened have been infected with the same strain of *Salmonella* bacteria. [Salmonellosis, the illness caused by infection with *Salmonella*](#), can cause severe and even bloody diarrhea, fever, chills, abdominal discomfort, and vomiting. Serious bloodstream infections may also occur.

Proper food handling, preparation, and cooking are the best precautions to take to prevent illness. Following [food safety guidance](#) can help prevent food-borne illness. Health officials warn consumers who handle and/or eat pork to cook the meat to a safe internal temperature, using a meat thermometer; whole cuts of pork should be cooked to 145 degrees. All meats and fish should be cooked to a safe internal temperature, using a food thermometer; [guidance can be found on the Department of Health website](#). Other food safety tips include washing hands thoroughly with soap and water before and after preparing food, especially raw meats.

To avoid cross-contamination, don't place cooked food on a plate that previously held raw meat of any kind. It's also important to sanitize cutting boards, knives, and countertops that come into contact with raw meat by using a solution of bleach water (1 teaspoon bleach per gallon of water) or antibacterial cleaner.

[Contact with live animals](#) — including pigs or other livestock at home, in petting zoos, at local fairs and elsewhere — can create exposure to *Salmonella* and other bacteria. Thorough hand washing after contact with live animals is an important tool in preventing the spread of disease.

The [Department of Health website](http://www.doh.wa.gov) (www.doh.wa.gov) is your source for *a healthy dose of information*. Also, [find us on Facebook](#) and [follow us on Twitter](#).

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